

the evil spirit that captured the sick man's soul. And, indeed, at times he stopped beating and gazed into the distance. In the beginning of the act the shaman beat the drum slightly and sang in a low voice, but gradually his voice and the drum beatings rose to a climax and the shaman turned his face to the southern window of the hut. The act lasted from fifteen to twenty minutes. During the performance the shaman imitated the neighing of a horse and the cry of some bird.

The third act consisted in inhaling from the sick man the evil spirits causing the illness, and in dispatching them to the south. The shaman had to dispatch four evil spirits. First the shaman sat on the floor behind the fireplace, not far from the entrance, holding in his left hand a *jalbyr* (see above) which he stretched out in the direction of the patient. Gradually, still in a sitting position, he moved toward the sick man, singing louder and shaking his head more and more. At a distance of about a meter from the sick man he rose from the floor and sat on a bank prepared for him. He continued to cry out his incantations, touching the sick man with his *jalbyr*. This movement is called *jalbiyal*. Slowly the shaman rose from the bank and, dropping the *jalbyr*, bent over the sick man. In a powerful voice he commanded his spirits to fulfil his order and to pass from the patient. He pretended to swallow them in order to dispatch them to their dwelling places. To this end, he ran out to the yard and after dispatching the spirits to the "south" he fainted. He was taken up and carried into the hut, quite exhausted. Then the shaman started for the "upper" world and brought back one of the souls, the *kut*, of the sick man which had deserted him, having been frightened off by the evil spirits. The shaman looked around to see whether any evil spirit was left near the patient. Once more he pretended to start for the "upper" world and he fainted when he returned to this world. He was revived by his assistant and the shaman sang his last incantation. This was the final act of the performance.

Vitashevsky was unable to record the text of the performance for the following reasons: it was almost dark in the hut; in spite of his perfect knowledge of the Yakut language many expressions in the performance were incomprehensible to him; the use of a phonograph to record the text would be prohibited by the shaman or otherwise influence the performance. When Vitashevsky invited the shaman to his hut for an interview the latter declined the invitation, saying that a shamanistic performance was too serious a subject for futile curiosity. The shaman, learning of Vitashevsky's presence during his performance, said that it would fail to benefit the sick man. Sieroszewski refers in his

- 123 book on the Yakut¹ to a shamanistic incantation, but other students of the Yakut criticized the authenticity of his text. I was more successful with Yukaghir and Tungus shamans. For a remuneration they recited their incantations in my phonograph and also dictated to me in order that I might be able to compare the two versions. In my work on the Yukaghir² I gave the Yukaghir text of a shamanistic performance on the Yassachnaya River. But the shaman himself, whose mother was a Yakut woman, originally recited the text in Yakut, which appeared in the Russian edition of my Yukaghir texts published by the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1900 (p. 118).

¹Sierosavski, *ibid.*, 641.

²Jochelson, Yukaghir, 201.

"In order to know a people thoroughly you must learn their language. Unfortunately I had not time to learn Yakut enough to be able to converse easily with the natives. But in a mixed gibberish of Yakut-Russian I was able from the beginning to exchange ideas with some of them, and later on I began to understand their conversation, which usually turned on the work of their daily life—namely, fish and fishing. Without pretending to compete with Baedeker by producing a Guide to the Yakut Language, I may perhaps venture to give a few specimens of the language."

T /116 cont./

122 of them and would have given a lot to be out of this romantic
133 region as quickly as possible and into the most disconsolate
136 one in the world, the tundra of the far north, beyond the timber
line.

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122 On July 31 we met the Jakuten /Yakut/ Ssemjón; the former
● 123 traveling companion of our Tungus guide, who was just in the
T process of looking for reindeer that had strayed away. Hailed
Y by his friend Nikolai, he immediately came on board and for
[197] the first time we now heard the sound of the Yakut language,
which certainly did not make a favorable impression on us
after the very melodious sounding Tungus language. Since his
tschum /choom/ and his family were supposed to be only a short
distance farther downstream, we set out again in his company.
Soon he pointed to a willow thicket where his dwelling was sup-
posed to be, and he and Nikolai tried to attract the attention
of the occupants by calls -- but in vain. Even after we had
landed in the vicinity and the Jakute, along with Nikolai, was
sent off to seek the family, their search remained fruitless.
Only a boy, a younger brother of Ssemjón, appeared; the
women seemed to have run away out of fear of us, or at least
it was put this way to us.

Since the place was not suitable for a camp, we went on a
few versts farther and as usual had our tschum put up on the bank
of the river, but several arshins above the water level. It had
been raining for a few hours and we were glad to get under cover,
because the rain was constantly increasing. During the night
/117/ it grew worse and continued, though with interruptions,
throughout the next day. We were thus forced to stay, and

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[131] Czekanowsky utilized the time to ask the Jakuten /Yakut/ about
the region. It turned out that he lived on the Kónamka, a
river that can hardly be found on any map other than Chitrow's
small one. Nevertheless, it is supposed to be one of the two
main sources of the Anábara, or, as it is called here, the
T Anábar, which is noted on all maps, albeit in very different
823] locations. Nikolai, too, drew various maps of the Olenék and
its tributaries. At first he had also tried to show the location

Y /117 cont./

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of the rivers by means of little sticks, as these people customarily do, but then he decided to take the pencil in his own hand and to draw a map on a fairly large scale, on which Czekanowsky then put the names according to his accounts. /The last paragraph on p. 117, pp. 118-119, and the first paragraph on p. 120 are omitted in the translation; see the foreign text. Page 120 continues as follows./

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The region in which we found ourselves was of interest to the Tungus because they were accustomed to get their supply of tea from here. That is, there is found here in great numbers a lady's-slipper (Cypripedium guttatum Sw.), which is very common in southern Siberia, indeed, even along the Tunguska, but along the Olenék, so it seems, is confined to this locality.

The leaves of this plant are a good substitute for tea, which I tried on the Tunguska and found very tasty. The natives of Siberia are supposed to know other substitutes for tea as well, especially Sanguisorba and Epilobium, but I myself have seen only the above-mentioned Cypripedium used as such, and I must say that the Tungus use such substitutes only in extreme emergencies, for they even completely reject the brick tea

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[184]

popular everywhere among the people in the south and actually not bad. I am speaking, to be sure, of the Tungus along the Tunguska, who were so spoiled that, in spite of our admonitions, they even threw away the tea from our pot, which had been drawn off only once and therefore was still quite usable even for poorer Europeans.

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During our stop at this place the water reached its greatest height and then began to fall again quite rapidly. On the evening of August 5 the rafts were ready and could be loaded, and on the next /121/ morning we were preparing to break camp when suddenly our guide up to here, Nikolai, who earlier had been ready to take us at least as far as the Argáchala, stated that he would go no farther. All threats concerning the isprawnik /ispravnik/, indeed, even the solemn reading of the open letter given to us by the governor general, which was translated by Sseliphon, did not make the slightest impression

T /121 cont./

(122 on the obdurate Tungus. By hasty flight and deep bows from
123 a distance he escaped a few striking demonstrations that I
wanted to add to the useless words as a last argument. So we
had to leave him, this time without the salute shots other-
wise customary. Candidly speaking, the man was completely
right. The generous recompense which he expected from
us, and in part had already received, was very pleasing to
him, but since he was a prosperous man and moreover an-
nually came to the Wiljuisk /Vilyuisk/ district, where he
could buy the necessities, particularly powder, our gifts were
much more a matter of indifference to him than, say, to our
old guide from the Mónjero to the Olenék. And that this
free son of the wilderness was very little concerned about the
police authorities, be it the isprawnik or the elder (schúlinga)
standing next to him, is probably not remarkable. To be
sure, after the journey we could enter a complaint against
him with the isprawnik of Wiljuisk. Apart from the fact that
this latter had already behaved quite inexcusably with regard
to our expedition and in any case we must first call him to
account through the governor, the isprawnik can do nothing
more than charge the schúlinga under whom Nikolai stands
with punishing him or sending him to Wiljuisk. That would
then cost our Nikolai at worst a pound of powder, a reindeer
skin, or /122/ something of the kind, and in any case he would
certainly not be found by the schulinga in his territory of
thousands of square versts before the whole matter had long
been forgotten both by us and the Wiljuisk isprawnik.

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● [123] Instead of Nikolai, the Jakute /Yakut/ Ssemjón accom-
panied us, and, despite the obvious falsehood about his lost
family, he did not make the slightest trouble about going
with us. He surpassed Nikolai in strength, but unfortunately
did not have his knowledge of the place, since he was going
along the Olenék for the first time and was familiar with the
river only in the region of the Ssiligír mouth. Sseliphon
similarly acted as interpreter, although not as well as for the
Tungus language, his mother tongue. According to Nikolai's
assertion, we should reach the Argáchala at noon on the same

T /122 cont./

122 day, but although we covered over 30 versts we did not catch
123 sight of it on this day and did not reach it until the following
afternoon. Although the Argáchala (or Argássala, for the
Jakuten commonly exchange the ch and ss and, among other
things, likewise commonly pronounce Ssiligír as Chiligír),
which empties into the Olenék from the left, does not surpass the
Olenék in size, as Nikolai had told us, nevertheless it comes
very close to it. /The remainder of the last paragraph on p.
122, pp. 123-124, and the first paragraph of p. 125 are
omitted in the translation; see the foreign text. Page 125
continues as follows./

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122 Our journey from the Argáchala on proceeded very well.
Although the most recent flood, traces of which we could see
in places even up to three fathoms above the present water level
(those of the spring flood sometimes reached six fathoms, if
not higher), had quickly ebbed again, the current remained
tolerable, especially since the wind too had finally moderated
and at times it even became quite calm. We covered 30-40
versts in a day by breaking camp early in the morning and,
taking only a short rest for eating, going on until sundown. To
be sure, that was not favorable for my observations, but what
could be done! At the place where Nikolai had left us we
were already beyond 68° latitude; at noon on August 9 I found
68° 24', but from there on we unfortunately again went greatly
to the south, indeed almost west, so that the Ssiligír mouth,
which, unfortunately, I could not identify, does not in any case
lie more northerly than the last point determined by me.

Y
• 123 We now met people several times. On the ninth we had
scarcely left the place whose latitude I had determined when
a loud voice called to us from the bank. It was /126/ an old
Jakute /Yakut/, Charlámpij, from the Wiljuisk /Vilyuisk/
district. While Czekanowsky questioned the talkative old man,
who had traveled far, about the Kónamka and the Kopikaí
(Popigaí on the maps), about which Ssemjón too could talk,
I used the time to make a few quick observations. Then we
went on and soon saw a column of smoke at a little distance

T /126 cont./

122 from the bank. From our camp, which was pitched in the
Y vicinity, we sent Ssemjón to reconnoiter, and he came back in
[437] the night with two Tungus, who, like the old Jakute, were
known to him from before. "I rarely see them," he said
laconically. In view of the way of life on both sides that is
probably very understandable. Soon it appeared that they had
previously had a business connection with regard to a mam-
moth tusk and, it appeared, not to Ssemjón's advantage.
They did not make a good impression in general, and, after
buying a reindeer calf, we parted from them as quickly as
possible. The people were from Lake Dshesse, but belonged to
the Syrungna Tungus.

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122 On August 11 when we stopped at midday Ssemjón said
123 that we were no longer very far from the Ssiligír, below the
mouth of which, on the small river Ssénjka emptying into the
Olenék from the left side, Jakuten /Yakut/ were said to be
settled. We had at first intended to go directly down to this
river, but now learned that the settlement was three days of
travel from the Ssénjka mouth, although from here, because
of the previously mentioned great bends of the Olenék, was
not very far, which was also confirmed by the fact that we
found a well-filled storage chamber. So it was decided that
Ssemjón was to hurry there and fetch the people, while we went
on to the vicinity of the Ssiligír mouth. It proved to be /127/
not very near, however, for we could not reach it until sunset
and therefore had to stop above it.

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[554] The next morning Ssemjón appeared in the company of a
[291] Jakuten /Yakut/, Nikolai Boldonó, whose appearance, though
[437] certainly not magnificent, showed that he was to be counted
as one of the wealthier ones. Namely, he had on a cotton
shirt and a flowered scarf around his neck, whereas all the
other Tungus and Jakuten whom we had seen so far along the
Olenék, even the earlier Nikolai, were dressed in leather and
skins throughout, a sign that they seldom or never have an op-
portunity to come in contact with traders or cannot afford their
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[437] prices. Later we learned that the imported dabá (a cotton ma-
terial usually dyed dark blue) is not too expensive, comparatively

Dolgán

/127 cont./

122 speaking, but so poor that a shirt made of it falls off the body
• 123 in rags after a few days. To be sure, this is defective goods
[437] from Jakutsk /Yakutsk/ or Wiljuisk /Vilyuisk/, which in this
respect is probably the last possible link in the long progression
of merchandise that moves from the factories to Nishni-Nowgorod
/Nizhni Novgorod/, Irbit, Tomsk, etc., steadily decreasing
in quality. A reindeer which we wished to buy was not brought
along, because the Jakute /Yakut/ had had a death in his
family a few days before and during his attending to the burial
the reindeer had gone astray. At least so he said, and he
showed absolutely no desire to accompany us. Only when he
saw the relatively rich presents in the form of powder, lead,
flour, tea, ropes, and the like that Ssemjón received for his
services did he decide to come along, at first probably with the
intention of soon leaving us again after finding a substitute,
whom he hoped to find somewhere in the vicinity.

122 Boldonó is not the only inhabitant of this region; /128/ on
123 the Olenék itself, above the mouth of the Ssiligír, we saw a
[342] tschum /choom/ and a large storage chamber. Its owner,
[343] Gurtschúna, likewise a Jakute /Yakut/, was not present, but
[131] had gone to the Dolgán, who, according to Middendorff's map,
are to be found from the mouth of the Anábára to the Jenissei
/Yenisei/ at Dúdino. The son of the schúlinga of this region
was also supposed to be staying temporarily in the vicinity of
the Ssiligír. And in fact we saw nets hung at the mouth of
the Ssénjka, which probably belonged to him, but he was not to
be seen, in spite of calls and shots. Ssemjón accompanied us
a short distance beyond the Ssiligír, which flows into the Olenék
from the right side with two branches at the junction and, after
the Argáchala, is probably its most important tributary. Then
he took his leave with many thanks and went back to his family,
which probably was now willing to be found.

/128 cont./

122 Our present guide, although an insignificant little man

- 123 about 50 years old with a physiognomy by no means intelligent, is a very well-known personality among all -- probably more correctly visitors rather than inhabitants of the upper Olenék -- for the route from the Anábara to the Wiljui /Vilyui/, as well as laterally to the Lena, which is said to be used even by the [443] traders, goes by way of his settlement. Boldonó probably plays on the Olenék the same role of middleman that Uwotschán and our old Golé play on the Tunguska, and neglects his pockets just as little as those two. Unfortunately Golé and Boldonó could not communicate their trade secrets to each other, because the former understood as little of the Yakut /Yakut/ language as the latter did Tungus, and Sseliphón, the interpreter, was too young to be initiated in such important matters, especially since he had enough cunning to spoil Golé's practice after their return.

- [443] /129/ We unfortunately had daily examples, often of the most ridiculous kind, of Golé's passion to make deals, even the most petty ones. He gladly took the smallest cigar butts and in general anything that had a name, in the previous year along the Tunguska even fired percussion caps /Pistons/, the uselessness of which he must have become convinced by now after more frequent use of our guns, for he threw them away him-
self. Concerning the prices of reindeer, skins, and the like, upon meeting people and after he had duly inquired about them, we could never obtain an account from him, or he gave very high prices, in the hope, in case of a possible trade, of profiting from our ignorance of the Tungus language, even if it were only an extra meal, although he really had no lack of them with us. However often he practiced such deceptions, not always so petty, and was therefore reprimanded, he could not stop it, and in view of his unquestionably very great services for our expedition otherwise, there was nothing to do but to watch him and give him as little opportunity for it as possible.

Y /129 cont./

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In another respect too the region was livelier. Countless

● 123 flocks of geese and gagären (Colymbus) were startled by us.

136 The former flew up by the hundreds amid a frightful shrieking and

291 beating of wings, while the loud voices of the latter, almost

237 reminiscent of children's cries, resounded continuously through

the quiet region. The gagären, of which there are three species on the Tunguska, but we saw only two of them on the Olenék, taste oily, but are nevertheless eaten by the natives. Caps are sometimes made out of the pretty violet velvet-like down of the neck; indeed, in Turuchansk /Turukhansk/ I even succeeded in buying an overcoat, besides a cap, to be sure for the relatively very high price of 50 rubles, which /130/ were shown great approval everywhere because of their peculiar beauty. Very light and also keeping off the rain very well, this feather coat warmed one excellently, so that I can strongly recommend it, especially for ladies. In Europe where the gagären also occur, it is said to come on the market occasionally, especially worked into muffs.

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Beside geese and gagären, gulls were also common, but only one species, with white neck and head, whereas on the Tunguska we had found several species. We more rarely saw swans, ducks, and cranes, and one bird not present along the Tunguska, called gäscha here, from afar very similar to our common stork, white with black wing tips -- probably it is a kind of crane, Grus leucogeranus, of which the cry is also

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[825]

reminiscent. Smaller birds appeared in noisy flocks, perhaps already proceeding on the homeward journey, and an owl was killed, which, it seems, is rare here, since we had seen only two specimens from the Tunguska on, while there is certainly no lack of other gangs of robbers on the rocks, in particular a kind of falcon called térne by the Tungus.

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Upon closer acquaintance our guide Boldonó thawed out somewhat and related a little about the region, but obviously not all that he knew by far and, as we learned later, much that was false, deliberately however. Otherwise he was obliging and in particular supplied us daily with fresh fish, which, along with geese, which were now also frequently caught,

/130 cont./

122 provided almost our only food, in view of the lack of reindeer
 • 123 meat. In laying out the nets, Boldonó used his own boat,
 114 which held our attention because it was made out of poplar
 174 wood. That is, in Middendorff (1) /131/ there is a note that

137 1. Sibirische Reise /Siberian Journey/,
 501 Vol. IV, Part 1, No. 4, p. 572.
 171

131] along the streams flowing into the Arctic Ocean west of the
 Olenék there are poplar boats, the material for which comes
 from the alluvial islands of the Olenék. Now, however, along
 the Olenék we had come across neither the aromatic poplar
 (Populus suaveolens Fisch.), which barely reaches the Tunguska
 (along it only one specimen was known to the population in the
 vicinity of Podwolótschnaja /Podvoloshnaya/ as a great
 rarity and this fell as an offering to science in 1873), nor the
 aspen (Populus tremula L.), which likewise has its arctic
 boundary much more to the south. To be sure, we heard that
 the first-named poplar occurs on some tributaries of the Olenék,
 indeed, even very far to the north, namely on the little
 Tyrachtán River, which empties into the Náukyt River,
 therefore probably about 70° latitude, but it is said to be very
 rare everywhere and of so little thickness that it cannot be used
 for any kind of work. Therefore where did those poplar boats
 come from? Boldonó's boat came from the Lena, brought from
 there by his father. If Middendorff's statement does not simply
 rest on an error, he perhaps means the islands at the mouth
 of the Olenék, where possibly poplar trunks from the more
 easterly Siberian rivers, but not from the Olenék, might have
 been deposited by the sea.

122 On August 17 we saw a young reindeer on the bank and
 123 soon afterward a human dwelling. A stop was made, and
 while I quickly made my magnetic observations, for which I
 now rarely found time, Boldonó went across the river and after
 some time appeared in the company of an oldish Jakuten /Yakut/.
 We had hoped to acquire in him a talkative successor to our all
 too silent guide, but in vain. Even less could be gotten out of

/131 cont./

- 122 this one; we could not even buy a reindeer from him. /132/
 ● 123 He pretended to be a poor man and to own only five of them, on which he had come here with his family; nevertheless immediately after he left us, we saw 11 fine reindeer, which accompanied us along the bank for a long time. We had already heard about the inhospitality and untrustworthiness of the people along the Olenék; now we could report on it ourselves.

Fortunately on the evening of the next day our attention was again drawn to a human habitation by a column of smoke. Soon after we had landed a little distance from it, a boat came toward us. The occupant of it, perhaps frightened because he saw me lounging on the bank with my gun, approached with his weapon held ready and called to us from a distance. Only when he was addressed in his mother tongue (Jakut /Yakut/) did [186] he put aside the weapon and come to land. He later explained [648] that he had taken us for Tatars, who, according to a legend that he had heard in childhood, were supposed to be great robbers. Boldonó's attempt to whisper something in the ear of the new arrival was fortunately thwarted by Sseliphón, and so he proved to be ready to sell us a reindeer immediately, as well as, after some parleying, to accompany us as a guide on our further travels. Boldonó was kept away from our new guide, named Ignátij, as much as possible by our men, who had also become suspicious of him, and was paid off the next morning, this time certainly not generously and with a few threats on account of his bad conduct. /The last paragraph on p. 132 and pp. 133-134 are omitted in the translation; see the foreign text./

- [342] /135/ On the evening of August 19 we again came in sight
 [231] of a tshum /choom/, as well as a larger herd of reindeer, probably about 50 head. Ignátij explained that this was a Jakute /Yakut/ with whom he was acquainted, Filípp Chologón, with whom in the previous spring he had hunted wild reindeer on the upper Beké, a rich man and formerly a community elder, who also knew the river well, "for he swims around on it like a gagára." In any case it would pay to make his acquaintance. We therefore, since no good landing place was to be found in his vicinity, put in a few versts below and sent Ignátij and

/135 cont./

122 Sseliphón to bring him to us early the next morning. The
123 men returned with the news that he was going to catch a
couple of reindeer that we wished to buy and would soon be along.
We waited for a long time, and finally he came with two
miserable reindeer, for which he wanted an exorbitant price.
Also he pretended to know little about the river, since he was
familiar with only a rather short stretch of it. In a very bad
humor over the useless stop because of him, we dismissed him
and left.

The weather was good, and we therefore hoped, although it
was already midday, to cover a good stretch before evening,
when there appeared an obstacle that lay completely outside all
our calculations. The Jakut /Yakut/ guide, who was sitting
quietly by the fire and mending his clothing with a needle
borrowed from our men, suddenly sprang up, uttered various
puzzling sounds, and with difficulty we were finally able to
learn that he had swallowed a large needle. In the most ex-
treme mortal terror he veéged about and complained of fright-
ful pains in scarcely understandable words -- how could he be
helped? Nothing more was to be seen of the needle in his
throat; the butter which we immediately gave him he sputtered
out again; it /136/ seemed from his statements that he had
probably already swallowed the needle, but in its course it
had, of course, severely injured the gullet. He expected
death at any moment; in any case he was in a most serious
condition, and we could not help him with the best intentions.
So it was best to take him back to his people or at least to the
nearest Jakuten. We quickly set about putting the sick man in
the boat with a few supplies and money -- if not for him, at
least for his family -- and our two Tungus took him away.

They returned in the night in the company of the Jakuten
/Yakut/ Filípp. The latter, who now appeared as a relative
of the sick man, obtained for his vindication a certificate to the
effect that he had taken him from us in a very serious condition,
gave a few signs with his finger concerning the further journey
on the river, and then quickly left us. He wanted to take the
sick man, who was still alive when he left, but whose throat
was greatly swollen, back to his family if possible and, in

/136 cont./

122 case of death, to take care of the burial, as well as the family
 • 123 and the many herds of reindeer, which, as Ignátij had told us
 earlier, belonged to a rich Jakuten in the Wiljuisk /Vilyuisk/
 area. Whether the poor man saw his people again we have not
 been able to learn. At the first leavetaking from Filípp he
 called after him that he was going very far and he was to tell
 that to his family. He was not thinking of the journey to the
 other world; he was at that time vigorous and healthy and was
 happy with us.

We were now again without a guide, provided only with the
 names of the most important rivers awaiting us and a few sug-
 gestions for recognizing them. /The remainder of p. 136,
 pp. 137-138, and the first paragraph of p. 139 are omitted
 in the translation; see the foreign text. Page 139 continues as
 follows./

As our previous guide had told us, we found the Jakuten
 /Yakut/ Christofór on the Hoppó River. When we saw the smoke
 from his hut, we cautiously landed at some distance and sent
 the two Tungus ahead. They learned from his wife that he
 would soon come. He did in fact appear before us after some
 time, probably only because fortunately one of the Tungus was
 still present upon his return. He could not sell us any reindeer
 at all. In order to serve us as a guide he would have to make
 a few arrangements at home and went back for that purpose, un-
 fortunately without an escort. When soon afterward we sent
 Sseliphón after him, he had fled with his wife, "kept his name"
 (pominaf kak swáli), say the Russians, and we had again had a
 completely useless delay, for I had long ago completed my
 observations. There are indeed no human beings here, but
 rather wild reindeer (wssjo rawnó bujúny), said Golé quite
 furiously in his broken Russian.

122 Without a guide and, what particularly annoyed us, also
 [136] without fresh meat, we had to travel on. In view of our rapid
 journey, hunting and fishing could provide little, especially
 since Golé had broken his principal weapon, the trident, on a
 stone. Only once did we succeed in killing, out of a flock
 of ten ducks (Anas glaucitans, called moklóok on the Tunguska),

/139 cont./

122 six of them with four shots. The animals flew up after each
 [136] shot and came down again a few steps away, without taking
 [223] any notice of the approaching hunters. This fearlessness of
 the animals, which is in direct contrast to the timidity of the
 human beings, is probably to be explained by the fact that the
 Jakuten /Yakut/ /140/ do not regard it as worth the trouble to
 squander precious powder on bird game.

[114] Our longing for some change of scenery was finally satisfied on August 29, in that the river, over half a verst wide, made two bends, which in a few hours of travel twice brought us around almost three-quarters of the wind rose. The topographer who had accompanied us the previous year would have been greatly enchanted by these topographical beauties (he feared that his colleagues in Irkutsk would scarcely believe that the Tunguska made such great bends), but we were certainly not, for the attainment of our journey's end was seriously endangered by these caprices of nature.

/141/

Seventh Chapter

100 The Jakuten /Yakut/ become more amiable. -- The iron Jegór and his statements. -- Bad weather. -- Northern vegetation. -- Falcon hunt. -- Unreliability of the Jakut statements. -- Beyond the 70th degree of latitude. -- Onset of winter. -- Icebound. -- Concerning the winter quarters. -- Message to Bulún. -- Internal affairs of our household. -- The fauna of the Siberian north. -- Freezing of the river. -- The local reindeer. -- Further travel on foot. -- Help in need. -- The Chatýgin family. -- Sachár O'ssipowitsch Rjeschétnikow. -- A Jakut balagan.

122 On August 30, not far from the little river of Ssukána, we
 ● 123 again came in sight of a human habitation and, to be sure, one still inhabited now, as we could see by the reindeer grazing in the vicinity -- we passed old, dilapidated huts several times a day. The call of our Tungus was soon answered. First a man and then a woman came down to the

/141 cont./

- 122 shore, as he said, a Jakute /Yakut/ from Lake Dshesse, who
 ● Q3 had married the daughter of the Jakuten /Yakut/ in residence
 here, Etukjui, and lived here at the moment, while his father-
 in-law had undertaken a journey, probably for trade purposes.
 The people were very friendly and immediately sold a rein-
 deer, although they themselves had few of them, but they could
 not be of further use to us. Our young host, not being from
 this place, did not know the region at all and, in fact, seemed
 to be a little dull-witted, and therefore he would not /142/
 do for a guide. Later, however, we discovered that we had been
 completely deceived by him, that he did come from this region,
 indeed even held a community office, and consequently
 would have been obliged to guide us. /The remainder of p. 142
 and the first paragraph of p. 143 are omitted in the translation;
 see the foreign text. Page 143 continues as follows./

[325] On September 3 we crossed the sixty-ninth degree of lati-
 tude, not without being delayed once by a very great bend, and
 toward evening met first the wife of Temír Jegór, mentioned to
 us long ago, and then, a few versts farther on, the man him-
 self, engaged in fishing. Temír Jegór, that is, the iron
 Jegór, a very martial-sounding name, which, however, comes
 from the skill at making ironware, knives, palmás, and the
 like, commonly found among the Jakuten /Yakut/, was a very
 vigorous graybeard about 60 years old, as he himself said, and,
 of all the men whom we had met so far along the Olenék, made
 by far the best impression. Without long entreaties he gave
 very detailed statements about the further course of the river up
 to the mouth, where he himself had been in former times, as
 well as in Bulún, where the upráwa /uprava/ (government
 board) was to be found.

/144/ It was especially interesting to us, however, to learn
 that he had already known about our expedition. According to
 his assertions, news of it had come to Wiljuisk /Vilyuisk/ at the
 time of the great fasting, but the inhabitants of the Olenék who
 had heard about it had fled from us simply out of fear. From
 our own experiences this account was very creditable, and even

/144 cont./

- 122 the statement concerning the date when the report was re-
● 123 ceived in Wiljuisk agreed with its dispatch. /The remainder
of p. 144, p. 145, and the first two paragraphs of p. 146 are
omitted in the translation; see the foreign text. Page 146
continues as follows./

On September 7, at the mouth of the very considerable left
tributary Ukikít, as Temír Jegór had prophesied, we met his
older brother Nikofór, who held the position of a dessjárník (a
community office). While I made magnetic observations in spite
of the bad weather, he told Czekanowsky something about the
further course of the river, the places where people were to
be found, and the like. In general, I must note here, the
results of such inquiries are reliable to some extent only when
they are made from different persons, completely /147/ inde-
pendent of one another. All statements about distances are
particularly unreliable; the number of days of travel is most
indefinite, as we had opportunity to experience often enough.
In addition there is the very common deliberate twisting of the
[441] truth, especially with reference to the trade routes. Since the
[443] Jakuten /Yakut/ settled here on the Olenék are all more or
[809] less middlemen between the Russian traders on the Lena and
the Wiljui /Vilyui/, on the one hand, and the Dolgan on the
Anábara, on the other hand, it is obvious that they do not want
to be seen on the maps by strangers whose intentions they do
not know. Such a route passing by Temír Jegór's dwelling
place led to the Dolgan.

- 122 On September 7 we passed a second considerable left
133 tributary with an especially wide mouth, the Birekta, and on
the next day the likewise quite large Butt. The tributaries
from the right side are insignificant, for here the Lena with
those belonging to it already comes too close. Unfortunately
we could only supply ourselves with meat from Nikofór; we
could not get a guide here either, because his son had gone
to look for stray reindeer, which, it seems, is one of the chief
occupations of these uncivilized peoples. /The last paragraph
on p. 147 and the first two paragraphs on p. 148 are omitted
in the translation; see the foreign text. Page 148 continues as
follows./

/148 cont./

122

● 123

On the same day we met another Jakuten /Yakut/, Christofór, a brother of the one living on the Náukit. He came to our raft in his boat, after he had first become convinced by a conversation from a distance with Sseliphón that we were real men and not some trick of the devil. He liked being with us, and he /149/ soon offered to accompany us as a guide, at least to the next Jakuten /Yakut/, Ssemjón, on the river Martschimdán, which we gladly accepted, for he knew the region well and moreover was a jolly fellow. On the same evening he went on ahead in his boat to notify Ssemjón, and the next morning we were met by a whole flotilla of boats: Christofór, Ssemjón, and two other Jakuten, each in his boat, which could hardly have carried more than one person anyway. /The remainder of p. 149 and the first two paragraphs of p. 150 are omitted; see the foreign text. Page 150 continues as follows./

122

When on the next morning, as well as during the night, the wind continued to rage, indeed blew stronger and stronger, when we saw how the snow, falling in thick masses since its sudden appearance from the northeast, had already covered the solidly frozen ground in quite wintry dress, indeed, when we noted that the maximum daily temperature no longer reached the freezing point and we, like our /151/ men, only scantily protected from the icy winds, were bitterly cold, then we finally had to acknowledge that the end of our journey by water had come more quickly than we had surmised, still far from our goal. But we could not possibly remain here at this place. There was not enough firewood in the vicinity and even less material to build ourselves, until the opening of the winter route, a hut following the Jakut pattern, a so-called golomó, or even, in case we could not hunt up sufficient means of transport, a so-called ambár, a storage chamber, in order to leave the most unnecessary things in it until later.

122

123

At least we had to drag ourselves on to the next Jakuten, Stepán, who, summoned by Ssemjón, had already appeared before us. His settlement was only a few versts away on the same bank where we were, but in view of the storm, even with increased pulling power, not attainable, for an island ahead with a sand-choked branch of the river on our side forced us to cross the river in order to reach proper navigable water along the other shore. That was a critical situation.

/151 cont./

122 Fortunately the next morning the wind, even though still
 ● 123 against us, was considerably weaker. The rafts were quickly loaded and once again we advanced. Exerting all their strength, our men, helped by Ssemjón, succeeded in steering us across to the other shore. There they recovered with food and drink and warmed their frozen limbs, and then, after circumnavigating the island, we again went to the left shore just abandoned, which we reached near the mouth of the little river Hólokit -- here there was a new difficulty caused by a sandbank extending into the river in a wide curve. Czekanowsky and I went ahead on foot, /152/ while the men again laboriously pulled the raft along the shore after going around the sandbank.

A few hundred paces below Stepán's dwelling we found a suitable place for our camp at the edge of the forest. The first night we had to content ourselves with our summer dwelling, but the next day a solid tschum was erected in the style of the one used during the previous winter, but smaller and covered with different materials. Reindeer leather was not to be had here for kind words or money, although the people, according to their own statements, had had successful reindeer hunting and therefore must have had leather. They offered us a covering of fish-skin, which, however, was quite torn, and probably, even in better condition, would have been suitable only for the summer. So we contented ourselves with our tent, out of which, folded double, one wall was made, while the other was put together out of some blankets and the tip covered with my old leather cloak. After the cracks at the bottom were carefully covered with frozen earth and the iron stove was properly heated within, we found ourselves organized quite comfortably and at least protected adequately from the present cold. How it would be later when the mercury froze would have to be seen. Our people likewise built themselves a warm dwelling, which was covered in particular with the birch bark brought with us in some quantity.

Now, first of all, the upráwa /uprava/ in Bulún must be notified of our arrival. Stepán was ready to forward a letter as far as his brother Jegór, who lived a day's journey downstream, on the Kofka, the latter was to hand it on to his nearest neighbor, etc., as far as Bulún. Unfortunately, however, Stepán himself

/152 cont./

- 122 feared that the letter might be left somewhere on the way, for
● 123 this /153/ was precisely the time when young and old went reindeer hunting and scarcely anyone was to be found at home. But there was no way out. We had already tried to send Ssemjón directly to Bulun, but without success. He maintained that he needed at least a month to go there (it is six long Yakut /Yakut/ days of travel) and must necessarily take his family along. Obviously he intended to mix business and pleasure, that is, to combine here messenger service with reindeer hunting. In this case we would have to wait two months for help from the upráwa and in the meantime the continuous night would come, which we obviously wanted to avoid, at least as much as possible. On the sixteenth the north-east wind blew so strongly that Stepán could not leave on the trip with his small boat; not until the next day, with the wind still quite strong, did he leave with the letter, which contained a copy of the open order signed by the governor general and the request to the upráwa to supply immediately 10-12 narten /Russ. narta, "sled"/ for the further advance of the expedition. /The remainder of p. 153, pp. 154-156, and the first paragraph of p. 157, except for the last sentence, are omitted in the translation; see the foreign text. Page 157 continues as follows./ That is, we had decided not to wait for the help from Bulun, but to push on, leaving behind part of the supplies and the collections, which could be brought to us later.

Our host, who at first only wanted to give two narten, finally raised this number to five, so that we could at least carry the most vital baggage and provisions, while we ourselves, to be sure, had to go on foot. We wanted to leave on the twenty-ninth, even though the ice was said not to be solid yet, for at first we need not pass by way of the river, but could go along the shore itself or on the shore ice. In the meantime the river froze completely on the twenty-eighth, at least near our camp, after a good freeze, which during the last night reached -19° R.

The packing of our things to be taken along and putting away those to be left behind in our host's storage chamber delayed our departure another day. To compensate for this we had the pleasure on the last evening of receiving the reliable report that our letter to the upráwa had first reached the community elder and was being forwarded by him personally to Bulun.

Y /157 cont./

122 The Jakute /Yakut/ who had received the letter from Stepán's
 ● 123 brother and sent it on to the community elder (starschiná) came
 to look us up himself, undoubtedly with the completely justified
 /158/ hope of a good tip. His narte too was of great help to us,
 since our baggage simply could not be accommodated on five
narten, and even on six only in an emergency, and therefore
 Golé fashioned a small hand-sled for himself.

Y
 136 I must note that the reindeer of this region were decidedly
 122 smaller and weaker than those that brought us from the Tunguska
 to the Olenék. The reindeer of the Tschuktschen /Chukchee/ are
 still smaller, as Middendorff says. We had heard from Baron Maydell
 and Dr. Neumann, who had been in Tschuktschen country a few
 years ago, that it is difficult to find reindeer bucks strong enough
 to carry a man, but this was not confirmed along the Tunguska, for
 a considerable number of our reindeer could carry Czekanowsky and
 Y me with ease, to say nothing of one of the Tungus, who are usu-
 [492] ally much smaller and more slightly built. But even here on the
 Olenék it might be difficult to round up suitable riding animals,
 and this is probably the chief reason why the people here, as well
 as in Tschuktschen country, travel almost solely on narten, while
 along the Tunguska they ride almost exclusively.

T
 122 On the day of our departure there was still enough to do;
 Stepán took possession of the well-sealed things remaining behind,
 then made as many notches on a piece of wood as there were in-
 dividual packages, pressed two seals on it, and then broke the wood
 T together with the seals. Stepán kept one half, and we took the
 Y other one with us, and Stepán was supposed to deliver the things
 [186] only to the one who showed him this half. Precautionary measures
 enough, but we were still somewhat concerned about the safety of
 [685] the provisions in particular, for Stepán suspiciously spoke a lot
 about mice, which often steal the supplies, Tungus robbers, /159/
 who supposedly break into the chambers, and more of the same.
 From all these little was to be feared, much more from Stepán
 and his family themselves, although the latter, during the whole
 time, had received enough from us and was also generously given
 presents on the last day. /The remainder of p. 159 and the first
 paragraph on p. 160 are omitted in the translation; see the foreign
 text. Page 160 continues as follows./

/160 cont./

122

The difficulties were almost insurmountable when on the third day, already within sight of our first principal way-station, Jegór's dwelling on the mouth of the Koíka, we had to pass a steep bank at least a verst long, at the foot of which blocks were piled high. Czekanowsky and I went over it very slowly and frequently falling, but without mishap. For the narten, however, a path first had to be made through the blocks of ice. The men worked for hours, until they finally succeeded in getting the narten, one by one, over the difficult place.

From the mouth of the Koíka we again on the third day, October 5, reached the mouth of the Boëntschíma, our second principal way-station, in the vicinity of which lived the messenger advancing toward us, Stepán. In six days we had covered a stretch of only about 60 versts, two Jakut /Yakut/ days of travel, and moreover in very favorable weather, but that could change at any moment, for since the fourth a wind, up to now still moderate, had come up, along with snow, sometimes from the southwest, sometimes from the northwest. It was clear that we could not travel very far in this fashion, especially considering the provisions. Happily help was near.

122

● 123

Our tschum was not yet ready at the mouth of the Boëntschíma when a narte appeared on the ice downstream and quickly reached us. It was a Wiljuisk /Vilyuisk/ /161/ Tungus, Jegór, who at the moment lived at the Tolóbka mouth, about 30 versts from here. He had to do some business with Stepán, so he said, and went on to see him, his dwelling lying somewhat inland from the mouth of the Boëntschíma. He soon came back, however, to set out for home again and now told us that the community elder was expected back the next day, but he himself would come to meet us with reindeer. Immediately the next morning we noticed that Stepán had probably received instructions concerning us, for he appeared early with good narten and reindeer, which had to be changed here, for the ones up to now were hired only to here or at most to the Tolóbka.

As usual, Czekanowsky and I did not wait for the harnessing and packing up, but went on ahead, not far this time. We

/161 cont./

- 122 had scarcely covered three versts when Jegór advanced toward
 ● 123 us, along with an escort and eight fine reindeer. He had obviously, judging by the distances covered by him, slept little, if at all, during the night. Soon our men followed; since the earlier narten and their drivers had come along, a narte could be hitched up for each of us, and we went on at a fast trot, despite the still difficult road. It was noticed that the people here are accustomed to driving, whereas in the previous winter along the Tunguska it was tried for the first time.

[492] A few versts farther the community elder, Peter Chatýgin, and another Jakute /Yakut/, Matféj Chatýgin, advanced toward us with four narten. Peter Chatýgin, alias Atschkássow, also called Morósw, a still young, handsome, strong, and tall man, made a most favorable impression from the first. He is probably the richest and most esteemed man of this region. /162/ and the office of elder has been handed down in his family already into the third generation. He had taken our letter to Ssiktjách /Siktyakh/ on the Lena, 180 (?) versts above Bulún, and sent it on from there. A merchant settled there -- the Jakuten called him Rjétschnikow -- told him that he must do everything in his power for the expedition, and all the more so since instructions could not be expected from Bulún very quickly, because the head (golowá) of the upráwa was not present at the moment, but had gone to the mouth of the Lena.

As a result Peter Chatýgin offered to take us to the Arctic Ocean himself, with his own reindeer, which, of course, we accepted with joy. Only one circumstance disturbed this joy -- we had to give up following the course of the river, for here in its lower course too it continued to have the same character which had almost brought us to despair throughout the journey, namely, going toward its goal in the most winding way possible. On the river itself it is supposed to be 17 hard days of travel to its mouth, and moreover through a completely unpopulated region, whereas the elder undertook to get us there in about eight days. There was no choice, for if we were still to venture to hope for some results in these northern regions, especially Czekanowsky with regard to the geology, we must

/162 cont./

- 122 get there as soon as possible. The survey of the course of the river must be given up; I might perhaps still succeed in determining astronomically the position of a few points on the main river or on its tributaries and through that gain facts for the map being drawn up according to the statements of the natives.

122 On this day we reached the dwelling of Matfěj Chatýgin, already somewhat below the mouth of the Tolóbka, /163/ and decided to accompany the community elder the next day to his temporary camping place on the Kútingna, a right tributary of the Olenék, where he still had to make some preparations for the further journey. After I had succeeded in determining astronomically this end-point of the methodical survey of the Olenék, for the sky had unexpectedly cleared in the evening, we continued our journey the next morning, October 7, at first a few versts along the shore of the Olenék up to the mouth of the Kútingna, then a stretch on it, and, after that, on the shortest route over mountain and valley to the dwelling of the elder.

We were no longer far from it when the guide said that just then the merchant from Ssiktjách, whom he knew, was passing by here and was spending the night in a nearby balagan. We, of course, immediately detoured from our route in order, after so many months, to come in contact once again with an at least halfway civilized person and were overjoyed to recognize in him a man about whom we had already heard, namely, Sachár O'ssipowitsch Rjeschétnikow, who, as a Cossack non-commissioned officer, had gone along on the Tschuktschen /Chukchee/ expedition of Baron Maydell and Dr. Neumann, had then advanced with the intercession of these gentlemen, and had been transferred here, where he now occupied himself with trade and was just undertaking a trip for this purpose to the Anábara and the Popigáí. With a knowledge of the Siberian north such as few have, because of his many years of travel, he could give us various bits of good advice concerning the route that we were to take, one stretch of which coincided with his.

/165 cont./

342 not always closable chimney, if it is not heated--nevertheless
 [362] we were pleased by the news that on our journey, especially on
 [122] the return trip, we would for the most part reach balagans for
 [123] spending the night, and only now, on the first two days of travel
 and then on the tundra, must content ourselves with the tschum,
 for which, incidentally, we obtained as a loan from our host a
 fine leather covering. /The remainder of the chapter, pp. 165-
 166, is omitted in the translation; see the foreign text./

/167/

Eighth Chapter

Travel by narten: -- The timber line. -- The parallel of the
 North Cape. -- The settlement of Kulady on the Pur. -- Wolves.
 -- Preparations for the tundra journey. -- Popular lectures for
 Jakuten /Yakut/. -- Patriarchal customs. -- Purga. -- The vil-
 lage of Boljkalák or Ustj-Olénskoje. -- Festive reception. --
 Geological data. -- Within sight of the Arctic Ocean. -- Canine
 concert. -- The illustrious dead of the Olenék. -- Fishing and
 hunting. -- Well-being of the natives. -- Exchange of gifts. --
 Off for home! -- Departure from the Olenék. -- Reception in
 Ssiktjach.

/The remainder of p. 167, pp. 168-171, and the first para-
 graph of p. 172 are omitted in the translation; see the foreign
 text. Page 172 continues as follows./

122 Thus our trip was assured and all that remained was to pro-
 vide for new, sounder narten /Russ. narta, "sled"/; these were
 finished in the next two days, the ones for Czekanowsky and
 myself even being fitted with leather kubitkas. Meanwhile we
 were profoundly bored during our wait of over four days.
 Czekanowsky had some trees cut down, measured them, and
 counted the annual rings. I had long finished with my magnetic
 and astronomical observations, having positively wrested the
 latter from the unfavorable weather. Thus there was nothing to
 do but chat with the Jakuten through the interpreter, particularly
 with the elder, who had caught cold traveling back and forth and
 therefore was now confined to his room, or rather to the yurt.

y /172 cont./

- 122 I brought out my magnetic bars and angled with them, as
● 123 well as with my pocketknife magnetized on them, for needles scattered on the table, to the great delight of those present, which was made known with an abundance of extraordinary interjections, in which these primitive peoples /173/ are able to accomplish a great deal. The fact that they could not do the same thing with their own knives, made of soft iron, no matter how much I touched them with my amazing bars, seemed particularly miraculous to them. Czekanowsky decided that if he ever traveled through these regions again he would provide himself with various magnetic playthings for barter.

- y
821 The compass caused almost even greater astonishment when they discovered that with this instrument one could find one's way in the tundra even during a snow storm. Their knowledge of astronomy does not seem to be very great; as far as was to be understood through the interpreter, the elder knew only the Great Bear, about which he maintained that "it moves its tail," but, with clear skies, experienced tundra guides are said to be able to orient themselves by the stars.

- y
571 The statements of the elder completely confirmed all the praise that Chitrow bestowed on the inhabitants of these regions.
y
736 Their love of their fellow men is positively unheard of and reminds one of patriarchal times and conditions. Not only do the
431 rich never abandon their poorer fellow tribesmen in case of need, they feed and clothe them, and if, as often happens, the reindeer fall prey to wolves, they replace the loss for the ones robbed --
736 Chitrow says that a Tungus of his acquaintance was supported in
431 this way for three successive years and that such support may
224 amount to 30 reindeer, a sizable fortune here -- there even prevails a custom whereby the hunting booty, especially slain reindeer, is shared among all the companions or family members; the pelt is given to each member in turn -- with the exception of the fortunate hunter, who fears losing his talent for hunting if he violates this custom held sacred by the fathers.
voo The two /174/ Tungus accompanying us made peculiar faces at

/175 cont./

137 The timber line now passed by us lies at $71\ 1/2^\circ$ latitude. It is not fixed very precisely, for individual streaks of forest extend tongue-like into the tundra, and here and there one finds smaller or larger islands of forest, so that here the transition from forest to tundra, in contrast to what we saw earlier, was a very gradual one. Lone before our last camp it was noticed that the forest was becoming steadily poorer and more stunted, and from there the signs of its imminent cessation multiplied. On the next day we crossed the watershed between the Pur and the Boljkalák, the last large tributary of the Olenék. Since it was no longer snowing we advanced quite rapidly, but when it became dark we had still not reached by far our camping place designated for tonight by the guide, but rather only a very small hut in the middle of the tundra, which we used to revive ourselves somewhat. Then we continued our journey in the darkness and finally reached a small, but cozily warm balagan on the little river Molokó, which empties into the Boljkalák. On the next day we followed the course of this little river and then the Boljkalák itself, but our /176/ guide, in shortening the route by cutting off the bends, multiplied its difficulties and in crossing the steep sides of the bank our narten, and we with them, frequently took a fall. Otherwise Czekanowsky

[133] was very satisfied. The rocks here decidedly no longer belonged to the Silurian formation which had become so very boring to us, [134] for coal appeared, but unfortunately no petrifications.

122 In the evening--it was October 20, that is, exactly four months since we had reached the river system of the Olenék at the Ljútscha Ongókton -- we found ourselves at the goal of our long journey, at the little village of Boljkalák lying at the mouth of the Boljkalák into the Olenék, officially Ustj-Olénskoje, i. e., mouth village of the Olenék, and stopped in front of the stately balagan of the local elder, which had been assigned to us for a dwelling. Informed previously about our imminent arrival, the entire male population -- it was an imposing crowd; we at least had not seen so many people together for a long time, but in all only seven families are said to live here -- stood ready to welcome us and greeted us with low bows as we climbed out, while upon entering the balagan we were received by the ladies of the house.

/176 cont./

entering the balagan we were received by the ladies of the house.

They had, of course, put on their most beautiful finery; we

• 123 were struck in particular by the very large silver earrings, which,

[301] by the way, are also fashionable among the wealthy Tungus women

[171] along the Tunguska and are also acquired there from the Jakuten

[177] /Yakut/. After the strenuous tundra trip we made ourselves

comfortable at the roaring fire of the fireplace, heartily glad

that from here we could, with a good conscience, turn back

toward the south, toward home. We had hoped to be here two

months earlier -- the reader has learned with what /177/ great

difficulties we had made it possible to be here now. /The re-

mainder of p. 177, pp. 178-180, and the first paragraph of

p. 181 are omitted in the translation; see the foreign text. Page

181 continues as follows./

114

Of the living scientists only one had come farther than we

on the mainland of Asia -- indeed, by almost three degrees of

latitude -- Middendorff at the mouth of the Taimyr. We also

did not forget the dead -- the intrepid mariners, Chariton Láptev

/Laptev/, Prónschischtschew /Prontschischev/, Tscheljúskin

/Chelyuskin/, and others who had trod this ground almost a

century and a half before us undertook from here their daring

journeys to explore the coasts of the Arctic Ocean and for the

most part also paid here for their zeal with their lives. All our

searchings for their graves, for remains of their dwellings, were

in vain. On the rocks which Czekanowsky climbed there were

in several places remains of old dwelling sites -- whether of

theirs remained doubtful. Every tradition of that noble expedition

paid for with such tremendous sacrifices /182/ has been lost among

100

the inhabitants (1). At that time Russian peasants probably lived

114

1. So it in fact appeared to us, but in the

following year Czekanowsky found the in-

habitants of Boljkaĭák much more communi-

cative. They showed him the graves of

Prónschischtschew and his courageous wife,

who had followed him into this desolate place.

On the last rock on the right shore of the

/184 cont./

224
[435] caught in traps, but is also dug out of its den, as we ourselves had an opportunity to observe on our return journey. The price of a good skin here yields on the average about a ruble, but many different kinds are distinguished according to quality, and the poorer ones are valued at only half a ruble; the winter pelts are, of course, the best. The highly prized blue variety of the arctic fox seems [651] to be practically unknown here. The crown tax as well as the goods purchased from the merchants are paid for with the skins of the arctic fox.

[543] Around Easter a kind of annual fair is held here, at which appear both the inhabitants of the islands lying in front of the mouth of the Olenék and those from the nearest settlements of the forest region, in order /185/ to trade skins for the necessary commodities

[571] from the traders -- tobacco, tea, cloth, ironware, etc. Despite the inhospitable climate the people here seem to be well off and [512] very content. Even during the dark months they go about their activities out in the open, especially fishing, and only about the [132] time of the reappearance of the sun, around the Day of the Holy Three Kings (sixth of January, old style), when the most frightful snowstorms set in, do they shut themselves up completely -- often

342 for a couple of weeks -- in their dwellings. The latter are much 362 more solidly built than in the forest region, in order to offer sufficient resistance against the force of the storms. The material 313 for building as well as for heating consists of driftwood which is supplied by the river and even more by the ocean. Besides the 797 merchants, Boljkalák is also visited almost annually by a missionary, who holds services in the chapel here. Chitrow praises the devoutness of the people -- the outward signs of this did not remain unnoticed by us either.

554 On the day after our arrival the elder (stárosta) of the 292 Kangaláss Jakuten /Yakut/ appeared with fresh reindeer for the return journey. He ranked higher than both the local elder and the one accompanying us and wore, as a mark of distinction, a sort of uniform, a yellowish gray cloth coat with red trimming 233 and a gold-embroidered belt with a short sword. The new reindeer, which had to be given a day of rest, and the previous ones

/185 cont./

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[182] that had brought us here were led a few versts farther to the right shore of the Olenék, where there was more food for them. Lack of fodder for the reindeer is the principal reason why the inhabitants here do not keep them as draft animals, but instead use dogs, which, because of the great quantity of fish food that they need, are very troublesome, particularly in years when fish are not abundant. Our host here has a /186/ splendid herd of reindeer, which, however, he keeps with friends in the forest region; aside from the lack of food, the wolves, for which we too had to keep a nightly watch during the trip on the tundra, and in the winter the violent snowstorms, are a danger to the reindeer.

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571 During our stay we received many presents of fish and arctic fox skins -- probably not the best, inasmuch as it was seen that we were not experts -- indeed, even garments that were no longer new, which, however, we refused. The people were generously compensated for this with tobacco, tea, sugar, ammunition, axes, and similar articles, in spite of their protests that they did not expect anything at all in return. The custom of giving and receiving presents during visits is widespread everywhere here, and while it is possible that those in higher positions, especially the local administrative officials, do not count on any return gifts, those of the same standing not only desire, but demand them, and it even happens, as Chitrow tells, that such mutual assurances of esteem end in lawsuits because one party is dissatisfied.

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[137] On the morning of October 23 our narten stood before the door ready for travel -- nothing held us in the north any longer; we left the village at a rapid trot, accompanied for a stretch by the population running alongside. We were going south, following the birds of passage that had hastened on ahead of us long ago -- they had reached their goal long since, but we were still far away, frightfully far! Our stations were the same as before up to the Pur; we traveled as quickly as possible, since nothing held us any longer. Czekanowsky only took along a couple of trunks from stunted larches, which were growing in the middle of the tundra in the protection of river valleys; the largest was as thick as an arm and barely ten feet tall, but of a considerable age.

/186 cont./

(122) Besides these stunted /187/ trunks, however, roots of great forest
(137) trees were found here and there in the ground far beyond the present timber line. A few such roots were pointed out to us; they show that the timber line is receding.

On the Pur this time we were assigned a very fine balagan in Kulady for a dwelling, in which we rested for a day from the exhausting trip across the tundra. On this occasion I must say
(22) something about the inhabited places here. Boljkalák, like a
(36) number of settlements on the Lena which we succeeded in seeing later, can properly be designated as a village. If it does not wholly correspond to our conceptions of such, nevertheless at least a few huts stand together, more than one family lives there, and the inhabitants themselves appear to be more prosperous. On the other hand, all the other places that we encountered on our journey are to be compared with, say, the Latvian workers in Livonia (scattered farmsteads) -- the Russian designation here for this is urótschischtsche. On quite a large area, which is customarily named after a little river, a few balagans lie scattered in the forest, often versts apart, and here, too, in Kulady. Even the balagan about five versts away in which we had previously stayed not far from the Pur was, it seems, counted as belonging to Kulady. /The last paragraph of p. 187, p. 188, and the first paragraph of p. 189 are omitted in the translation; see the foreign text. Page 189 continues as follows./

(22) On the evening of November 1, we finally arrived safe and
(23) sound in the village of Ssiktjách /Siktyakh/ on the Lena, where we found the friendliest reception in the house of Rjeschétnikow. Having been informed of our imminent arrival by the Cossack long before, Mrs. Rjeschétnikow had put in order for us her only two rooms. The building consisted essentially of a Jakut /Yakut/ yurt, but was much larger than those offered to us before, on which two small rooms had been built; in one of the latter there was a Russian stove, which opened up the agreeable prospect of
(24) freshly baked bread. We were entertained not only with that, and
(122) with fine cakes, fish, and the like; Mrs. Rjeschétnikow daily
(123) showed us hospitality with splendid potatoes which she had grown

/189 cont./

122 here in Ssiktjách. Besides potatoes she also raises turnips, radishes,
● 123 and cabbage, but the latter no longer sets heads. In Preobrashén-
241 skoje /Preobrazhenskoye/, the last place on the Tunguska where
vegetables are grown. Mrs. Akúlow also complained about this.
Preobrashénskoje, however, lies at the 60th degree of latitude,
Ssiktjách at the 70th. The Ssiktjách potatoes were not at all
inferior to those of Preobrashénskoje and were considerably larger
than those from Turuchansk /Turukhansk/ that we had obtained
the previous year, which may be due in part to the variety, for
in Turuchansk we found round potatoes, in Ssiktjách longish ones,
[223] up to two inches long. Mrs. Rjeschétnikow also keeps some
chickens, but complained that she gets only a few eggs from
them; in part this may be due to the way the poor animals live --
they are kept in a dark cage under the stove and at most are
permitted to walk about the room; even in summer they cannot
/190/ go out in the open because of the many dogs, which are used
here as draft animals, especially for hauling wood.

122 Unfortunately, here in Ssiktjách, just like the year before in
123 Jenisseisk /Yeniseisk/, we had to undergo the experience that
the first entrance into a warm room after a long and difficult
journey is not beneficial to one's health. For several days we
felt listless and suffered from headaches, and I from a swollen
cheek as well, which scarcely made it possible for me to give
Mrs. Rjeschétnikow's cooking the attention it deserved.

And yet what great charm lay in this return from the wilder-
ness! Even though Ssiktjách was such a remote outpost of culture
and for a civilized European a wretched hole, how many long-
missed enjoyments it offered us. Only someone who has been
in this position himself can appreciate the pleasure that we felt
when for the first time we undressed once again in a warm room,
made our toilet at our ease in European fashion, and then put
on the clean finer clothing that had been lying unused in our
suitcases for almost a year. Perhaps a cadet who puts on the
trim officer's uniform for the first time experiences something
similar. How I had longed to be able to put my legs under a
table again, for eating and writing on one's knees or at best on

122 /190 cont./

- 123 [352] a low box, usually in a half-reclining or crouching position, is very tiring after any length of time. In the yurts of our hospitable Jakut /Yakut/ friends we had occasionally found miniature tables from one to two feet high, which were placed beside the sleeping places, but here in Ssiktjäch for the first time we again sat on chairs at a table covered with a clean cloth.

/191/

Ninth Chapter

- 100 The Jakut /Yakut/ dignitaries. -- We exchange gifts. -- Narten of persons of rank. -- Northward again! -- Küssür. -- The upráwa /uprava/ of the Shigansker Ulússes /Zhigansk ulus/. -- The clergyman from Bulún. -- The ivory trade. -- The population. -- Prohibition against liquor. -- Unselfishness of the upráwa. -- At the Arctic Ocean again. -- The Jakut stan. -- Astronomical observations with the mercury frozen. -- Dshejelák-Dshaná. -- Animal husbandry in the far north. -- The northern part of the Werchojansk /Verkhoyansk/ district.

- 122 [123] [554] [292] During our stay in Ssiktjäch /Siktyakh/, the notables of the entire district one by one honored us with their visits -- various elders in the uniform described above, and finally a former golowá of the entire ulússes /ulus/, a dignified old man in a much more elaborate uniform than the others. His belt consisted of a broad gold braid and on it hung two swords, one an emblem of his office, the other, with pretty silver decoration on the hilt, a gift of honor from the government. We now conferred with these dignitaries about our further journey. Upon our arrival we had planned to move on, after a short rest, in a southerly direction, if possible, following the course of the Lena, directly to Jakutsk /Yakutsk/, or, if this could not be done, to travel to Wiljuisk /Vilyuisk/, and had even entertained the bold idea of skirting Jakutsk in the latter case and hastening via Oljókminsk /Olekminsk/ as quickly as possible toward the longed-for south. At first we /192/ did not at all believe the assertions of our advisors that the execution of these travel plans

/192 cont./

122 simply could not be accomplished in this season of the year, since a completely uninhabited stretch of land several hundred versts wide lies between Ssiktjach and the southern districts, which one can cross only if the necessary reindeer are distributed at various intermediate stations, but several weeks would be required for that. It was said that even the Bishop of Jakutsk on his last sojourn in the north, after a few days of travel which he made on this direct route, had been obliged to turn back and take the customary route via Bulún and Werchojansk /Verkhoyansk/.

[132] It is understandable that we resisted as much as possible further traveling in a northerly direction. With the exception of a few hours on the afternoon of November 2 the mercury remained frozen continually, the cold increased to -37° R., and with such a temperature, which, quite apart from the darkness -- for soon the sun would disappear for a few months -- would, of course, prevent almost any observations, however hasty, we were supposed to go out again into the tundra, in the vicinity of the Arctic Ocean, whose terrible snowstorms we had hoped to escape forever. It had to be done, however, and after long hesitation we finally agreed that preparations for our passage along the route to Bulún and Werchojansk should be made, for though there are no settlements there for hundreds of versts, at least comfortable yurts for travelers exist there, and the inhabitants of the surrounding populated tracts of land are equipped to send on the post or one of the officials of this inhospitable district from time to time.

• 123 /193/ The few days of our stay in Ssiktjach passed quickly
122 enough with the preparation of our baggage for the further journey. While we packed our collections as well as we could so that they might withstand all the perils of the enormously long journey, we tried to get rid of the other effects insofar as they seemed to us in any way dispensable. There were only a few things, such as shovels, axes, pickaxes, and the like, that Czekanowsky gave to our guide Atschkássow to store in case of his possible return the next year; many other things, such as our

/193 cont./

122 iron stove, which we should no longer need in the yurts, as well
 ● 123 as our supplies and kitchen utensils, we presented to our friendly
 hostess, who could make good use of them. She also wanted to
 keep our dog Waltusch, but we could not bear to leave our faithful
 companion on two such difficult expeditions here in this climate
 obviously unfavorable to him and carried out our resolve to take
 him back to Irkutsk to his well-earned rest. He is now living out
 the rest of his days in quiet contemplation with a butcher there.
 According to the custom of the country, Mrs. Rjeschétnikow in-
 sisted on giving us a present in return and provided us with some
 fine fish for the trip. In addition, Czekanowsky received a
 Russian-style fur cap, the crown of which was made of dark fox
 [291] paws and the brim of river beaver. I was given a Jakut /Yakut/
 fur hood, likewise of fox paws and lined with squirrel skins, and
 a pair of huge mittens of the same kind of fur, beautifully em-
 broidered at the wrists and provided with an opening through which
 [171] one could put out one's hand without taking off the mitten. This
 extremely practical mitten is found /194/ throughout northern
 Siberia and is to be recommended to European soldiers and hunters.

493 During the cold season persons of rank here travel in com-
 (484) pletely covered narten /Russ. narta, "sled"/, into which one crawls
 [554] from the front and then, wrapped in soft and warm skins and
 covers, sleeps through the entire journey. They are so low that
 sitting up is impossible, and, of course, it is equally impossible
 to see anything of the region through which one passes -- reason
 enough for us to forgo this comfort and be content with our narten
 used up to now, equipped only with a kibitka.

122 On the afternoon of November 5 we took cordial leave of Mrs.
 [132] Rjeschétnikow and drove off in a northerly direction, with a tem-
 perature of about -33° R., which during the night even dropped
 to -38° R. On the way we visited the family of our guide
 Atschkássow, with whom we exchanged a few presents, and on
 the evening of the following day reached some yurts which bear the
 name Küssür /Kyusyur/ and lie on the right shore of the river,
 diagonally across from the larger village of Bulún, the chief
 place on the lower Lena. We chose to stop here because our

/198 cont./

273 supervised, is simply not in a position to carry out this measure
273 with great strictness. On the Jenissei in particular, where trade is
437 much brisker than on the Lena, great quantities of liquor are sold
441 to the indigenous tribes by the merchants; the officials, even if
they actually desired to resist bribery by the traders, are only
rarely in a position to stop the mischief, for even though they now
and then seize a shipment of liquor, they are usually obliged to
hand it over again to the owner, who insists that it is needed for
himself and his own workers. The thirst of a Russian, even though
it may be colossal -- the climate also brings this about -- cannot
very well /199/ be lawfully curtailed if it does not lead to excess.
It is certain that the Russian government does at least as much as
any other government in similar circumstances -- particularly the
North American and English ones -- to acquaint the original in-
habitants with the good aspects of civilization and to keep the
corrupting ones away from them, but profit is as dear to the
Russian merchants as to the foreign ones, and liquor, as is well
known, is the favorite article of trade and the most profitable one
for the traders everywhere.

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Before our departure the leaders of the district assembled
here gave us a demonstration of their unselfishness which cannot
be appreciated enough. Our guide Atschkássow had already
definitely refused to accept any kind of remuneration for the
service performed for us and for the large number of reindeer
that had been used for our transport for weeks; when we now be-
gan to speak of remuneration here, the golowá told us that the
upráwa had unanimously decided to transport us to the border of
the ulússes without any recompense whatever. At our request this
decision was put in writing by the secretary and signed by all the
members of the upráwa, which was done by an impression of their
seals, to which the secretary added the corresponding names.
These quasi coats-of-arms, any symbol, a flower, an animal, and
the like, blackened with soot, were pressed on paper. We did not
fail to present this official document later to the isprawnik
/ispravnik/ of the Werchojansk /Verkhoyansk/ district, to which
the Shigansker uluss /Zhigansk ulus/ belongs, as well as to the

/199 cont./

- 122 governor of Jakutsk /Yakutsk/, who immediately agreed to thank
 ● 123 the honest Jakuten /Yakut/ personally for the help given us. To
 our great pleasure, our old friend /200/ Atschkássow was assigned
 to us as courier for the journey as far as the border of the ulússes,
 and he willingly accepted this decision of his colleagues, although
 we had already laid claim to his services for such a long time.

We were glad to be able to show our appreciation in some measure at least for the great services rendered to us here by leaving for our friendly hosts the rather considerable remainder of our powder, an article always greatly prized here, but now regarded as especially precious because the annual government shipment of powder had failed to appear this year. Atschkássow, of course, was as richly rewarded as our means allowed. My powder horn, which I believed to be no longer necessary in the continuously prevailing temperature of 30-40° R. below zero, delighted him greatly, and even more a Chinese cap which I had bought in one of the many Chinese stores in Irkutsk. The latter, to be sure, was so unique that it would have attracted attention even in Europe; that is, it consisted of two half-circles of fine brown felt lying one inside the other, which, upon being pulled apart, formed a hollow, egg-shaped body on which one could not detect the tiniest seam. I have been told that these caps, very cheap incidentally -- mine cost one ruble 20 kopecks in Irkutsk -- were made by pressing the mass of felt on a form of ice, which later melts. Any other way of making them is indeed inconceivable.

- 122 On the morning of November 8, we set out again in a
 133 temperature of -35° R. The sun was no longer rising for us on
 [32] that day, but for a long time the southern sky glowed with the most beautiful colors. First we went up the valley of the little river Ebetén, which empties into the Lena not far from Küssür and distinguishes itself unfavorably because of much Aufeis /surface ice/. One /201/ recognizes this by the blue or green color and avoids it whenever possible, for often, under a relatively thin covering of ice, one encounters large hollow spaces or even flowing

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122 walls testified to many visitors, mostly merchants from Ustjjansk and Werchojansk -- even the clergyman from Bulun was not missing.

The stations along the more traveled roads in this northernmost part of Russia, even though they are not inhabited and therefore made more hospitable, are nevertheless a great boon to the traveler. Built and maintained by the administrative board, whose members themselves use them often enough on their official journeys, in favorably located places, usually near running water, they are generally provided with a supply of wood and sometimes even ice, for there prevails here the laudable custom that everyone passing through thinks of his successor and augments the supplies as much as he can.

122 What a comfortable feeling came over me when, after

● 123 hours of uninterrupted travel in the frightful cold, which -- especially when it is accompanied by the wind, as more commonly happens here in the vicinity of the ocean -- gradually penetrates even the warmest clothing, I finally saw a shower of sparks rising in the distance and soon glimpsed the ice windows, glowing through the darkness like fiery eyes, of the /203/ station heated by the Jakuten /Yakut/ who hurried on ahead. These obliging people could not hurry out to help me out of my wrappings quickly enough for me, but before entering the yurt I usually threw off my outer fur coat, stiff with ice, and then busied myself at the fire for a long time thawing out my beard, which was frozen together in long icicles and often even to my clothing. Meanwhile my bedding was brought in and thawed out a little, and finally -- what ecstasy -- I lay on my bearskin and in front of me stood the steaming teakettle; with burning pipes -- it was impossible for me to smoke outdoors, although at every stop the Jakuten smoked their small pipes, which burned for only a few minutes, to be sure (as they are used by all the peoples of East Asia, especially the Chinese and Japanese) -- the hot tea before us, we, with Czekanowsky, conversed for hours about the experiences of the day, and only from time to time did I venture out to read the thermometer set up outside.

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Only with difficulty could I now bring myself to make astronomical observations, in spite of the stars shining most brilliantly in this magnificently clear air. The tips of my fingers were in a condition of continually losing skin and after every observation, during which I had to expose them for some time, were so frightfully painful that I -- otherwise not at all very sensitive -- once broke out in loud, nervous weeping and had to be taken back into the yurt almost forcibly by Czekanowsky.

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The most extreme cold during which I made successful observations with a Pistor reflecting circle and mercury horizon was -33.7° R. Since mercury freezes at -32° R., I kept mine in the warm yurt for some time before the observation so that it /204/ would not stiffen too quickly outside. The little needles of ice floating in the air, which cover the instrument and particularly the artificial horizon, are the greatest annoyance during observations; therefore in the most intense cold I could only observe the moon -- the sun, of course, no longer appeared above our horizon -- inasmuch as the images of even the brightest stars were difficult to see and often disappeared at the moment of observation. My respiratory organs also suffered considerably, because I could bring the instrument near my face only by holding my breath.

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The next day's journey brought us into more cordial regions again. After an eight-hour trip we reached the timber line, after we had come over a ridge into the river basin of the Omoloſ (which flows into the Arctic Ocean) and thus had crossed the border of the Shigánsker Ulússes /Zhigansk ulus/. Our pleasure at having again reached the protective forest was dimmed only by the departure of our kind courier Atschkássow, who on the next day accompanied us only on the short distance to the next stan, Dshejelák-Dshaná, where we were to find new guides and fresh reindeer. We found here an excellent well-heated yurt, the dwelling of one of the wealthiest Jakuten /Yakut/ of the Werchojansk district, Martin Borogón, who at the same time was the community elder and had to provide for our further journey. Unfortunately he himself was on a trip, but he had instructed his

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son Iwán to take care of any officials passing through, and we were thus entertained in the most friendly manner, and on the following day preparations were made at once for our unimpeded further journey.

On this evening I celebrated my birthday, for which for many weeks I had been saving a few cigars, /205/ which -- although, as I have said before, they had by no means come from Havana -- as a pleasure missed for a long time, put us in the jolliest mood. As of late we had had only pipe tobacco, which we had managed to get in Ssiktjách and Bulún with great difficulty and which could hardly last as far as Werchojansk. Besides, our host had set before us a delicacy that we liked very much, a mixture of butter and whey, called konják here. It is made out of cow's milk and, to be sure, what interested us most,

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here on the spot. To our great astonishment we had noticed a few horses and cows just a few versts from our present lodgings, which we had certainly not expected here, scarcely 30 versts from the timber line and at a latitude of about 70° . In Ssiktjách, located still somewhat to the south and much farther from the timber line, Mrs. Rjeschétnikow, who otherwise, as has been mentioned, was very successful in her acclimatization experiments, had told us about the impossibility of raising livestock in that region, and even much farther upstream on the Lena we were told that there were no horses, to say nothing of cattle, which, indeed, is scarcely found at all along the Lena beyond Jakutsk and its close surroundings.

We learned from our talkative host various details about his livestock. It consists of about 20 horses and over 10 head of cattle. The former were brought here by his grandfather and the present specimens were born and raised here. They belong to a small, but vigorous breed, have a thick pelt, and withstand the terrible cold very well. Summer and winter, day and night, they remain out in the open, and only the foals are treated somewhat more gently. /206/ Cattle raising, on the other hand, requires much greater effort. The stable abuts directly against the yurt and gets its warmth from it, and also, in order not to let any cold in, has only one door, into the yurt, which in fact brings into

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361 smaller than we had thought -- the church with the house of the clergyman, the building for the isprawnik /ispravnik/. then the pride of Werchojansk -- the two-story house of the merchant Nikita Seemjónowitsch Goróchow -- two or three other houses and several yurts, very scattered, and that was all.

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123 Nevertheless we were heartily glad that we were here and were most pleasantly surprised by the friendly reception in the house of Mr. Goróchow. The present master of the house was still a young man /213/ barely 30 years old and, as was soon shown, relatively highly cultivated; he had Petersburg newspapers, played the violin, and busied himself with photography. We obtained from him quite a good photographic view of Werchojansk. He obviously belonged, so to speak, among the patricians of this town, if he is not the only one of this type, for the few other men who were visible more in the background during our reception were not introduced and seemed to be dii minorum gentium.

122 In those places in Russia, and particularly in Siberia, where there are no guesthouses, therefore in practically all of them, with the exception of the largest towns along the important roads to Moscow, there are available for travelers who pass through on orders from the government temporary lodgings which, for the most part -- of course, only according to local conceptions -- are furnished quite respectably and usually belong to the more highly esteemed inhabitants. One pays nothing here in rent, but, on the other hand, does pay for service and, of course, for food and drink. Here in Werchojansk it was different, for the Goróchow family, for several generations, would not be deprived of entertaining distinguished travelers -- free of charge, of course -- by themselves. Thus a few years before us Baron Maydell and Dr. Neumann rested here on their journey to the Tschuktschen /Chukchee/ country and back from there; indeed, almost 50 years before us Baron Wrangell /Wrangel/ stayed with a forefather of our friendly host, who, however, in Wrangell's travel account (in the Russian edition) is erroneously called Doróchow.